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ABSTRACT

Class collaboration and small group composition illustrate the embedding of cooperative learning theory in whole language classroom events. Through this experience all students participate in active learning. The teacher has a weighty role in decision making, setting of the lesson, assigning roles, and monitoring segments of cooperative learning as these are embedded into whole language oriented lessons. Students' self-selected reading choices and writing topics serve as a focus for cooperative learning. Writing guidance is given in a class collaborated setting as well as in a group collaboration before the students do individual writing. During implementation, the strategies, story mapping, and the writing process intertwine while students and teacher act collaboratively and cooperatively. Students are introduced to "fractured fairy tales" by professional authors, and use simple story maps to focus on the various components of each story. In the next step, the class collaboratively writes a fractured fairy tale, going through all steps of the writing process. Then students repeat the process in groups of four or five before composing an individual piece of writing. This process has been used successfully by preservice teachers in a field based program and by practicing classroom teachers. (An example of a fractured fairy tale created by inner city second graders from northeast Ohio, a representative bibliography of 13 original fairy tales and 9 fractured fairy tales, and 19 references are attached.) (RS)

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ADAPTING COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND EMBEDDING IT INTO HOLISTIC LANGUAGE USAGE

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ADAPTING COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND EMBEDDING IT INTO HOLISTIC LANGUAGE USAGE

The whole language philosophy and cooperative learning are a natural marriage. Students can speak to each other, listen to each other and all for real reasons as they genuinely attempt to communicate.

Class collaboration and small group composition (Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987) illustrates the embedding of cooperative learning theory in whole language classroom events. Through this experience all students participate in active learning. The teacher has a weighty role in decision making , setting of the lesson, and monitoring and intervening segments of cooperative learning as these are embedded into whole language oriented lessons.

Students guided self selected reading choices and writing topics serve as a focus for cooperative learning. Writing guidance is given in a class collaborated setting as well as in a group collaboration before the students do individual writing. The first two activities serve as modeling and guided practice before the individual writing. Through this type of innovative experience students can become empowered in their own learning.

An orientation to the whole language and cooperative learning perspectives follows. The orientation will culminate with an integrated demonstration of these two philosophies incorporating webbing and trade books.

WHOLE LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY

We have come to realize that the reader and text interact as the reader constructs meaning from his\her reading (Newman, 1985; Chalkins, 1986; Goodman, 1986; Atwell, 1987; Smith, 1988; Healy, 1990). The reader brings whatever prior experience he\she has to the text (Carbo, 1987). She also brings her particular style to the reading event. She uses these tools as she constructs meaning from the text. On the other hand, text presents itself with an intent; it was written with a specific reason in mind, cultural cues, common referents of the society, standard text cues such as paragraph patterns, transition words, and picture cues. The reader is constantly predicting the text or constructing meaning as she reads. Based on prediction confirmation or miscue, the reader will access syntax and grapheme\phoneme cues in order to fix up any miscues and incongruities. (Harste & Burke, 1977) This places the readers sense of meaning getting at the center of the reading event.

Thus, ". . . children spin a web of meaning around authentic text for authentic reasons. The various strands of language available to the child to serve as threads in the construction of the Web: speaking, listening, writing, reading." (Vacca, Vacca & Gove, 1991, p. 34).

The language usage we advocate here uses children's collaborated writing as a pivot point for authentic reading of each other's production. When children need to cooperate in order to produce, they speak with each other using language necessary for

clarification, explanation, elaboration, argument etc.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

The whole language philosophy is supported by planning cooperative efforts for classroom experiences. Although students determine what they will write, the teacher plays a weighty role since she as specifies academic and cooperative objectives, arranges the room and assigns student roles, structures the individual accountability, and monitors students' behavior (Johnson, & Johnson, Johnson-Holubec, 1986) as they experience language . This process oriented approach encourages learners to have face-to-face interaction so that cooperative skills, necessary in the real world, are practiced.

Actually, the teacher is the pivotal point in the students achieving success during the cooperative\whole language experiences. The teacher's role in planning for cooperation is one of decision making. She sets the direction of each lesson and monitors students interactions so that she can intervene when necessary. The teacher must identify the academic and process goals and objectives, decide on group size, assign students to groups, arrange room, and assign roles. In addition to group assignments the teacher needs to assign individual roles within the groups. Each member needs to be responsible for a job that will contribute to the groups product, just as in real life. Of all of the decisions that need to be made by the teacher, deciding on the appropriate group size and assigning students to groups seem to be central to success as students engage in whole language activities.

The ideal group size is dependent upon the age of the students, how much experience the students have had with grouping, and what is needed for the task. The smallest group is two; the largest should be 5, with the teacher as the fifth member. (Lendgren, 1986) However for the model that is describe here, four members were heterogeneously chosen ,as opposed to homogeneous or random grouping, as an ideal group configuration. The group size of four was chosen because it is appropriate for the task. There are four cooperative\ collaborative roles involved in this task thus each student plays a role. Heterogeneous grouping was used because students learn best in mixed ability groups as all take responsibility for each other's learning. (Bayer, 1990, p 104)

It is the teacher who is responsible for assigning the roles that students enact because she knows the strengths of her students. Roles include possibilities such as; reporter, reader, recorder, materials handler, summarizer, praiser, generator of further ideas, asker for help, encourager of participation. The teacher acts as an explainer of the roles and a role model of the roles. The teacher should explain and model each of the roles that are in use in the groups. In collaborative writing model described below, the teacher decides which of these roles are to be highlighted for attention and refinement. Generally a recorder and a reporter are needed. Depending on the academic and process goals, the other two roles will be chosen for group members.

The teacher's knowledge of curriculum, contents, and processes comes to fruition as she sets the academic goals of the lesson so that the lesson intertwines with the goals of the curriculum.

Although the lessons have room for student input, it is the teacher's decisions that accomplish the curriculum goals. In addition to curricular decisions, the teacher establishes the criteria for success. When the students are clear about what is expected of them they will produce. In this way they experience an important sense of accomplishment as they work with and communicate with their group.

Finally, the teacher continually monitors students progress and group interaction so that she can intervene when the group gets off track or gets stuck. The teachers role is to ask leading questions that will help them enact their roles as well as stimulate their own problem solving strategies. Teachers, who continually join the groups, stimulate the interaction, and encourage and praise the members, find this model extremely enervating for all as well as successful in accomplishing academic and process goals.

IMPLEMENTATION

During the implementation the strategies, story mapping and the writing process, intertwine while students and teacher act collaboratively and cooperatively. The students are completely emersed in story mapping as they work collaboratively. They are put through the entire writing process from prewriting to sharing (Hosskisson & Thompkins, 1987, p. 164).

The first step in this process is to introduce students to various forms of writing by professional authors. Various forms of "fractured fairy tales" are used to show the students the different

ways that fairy tales can be changed by modeling a piece of writing by an author. For example The True Story of the Three Pigs, Snow White in New York, and Sidney Rella and the Glass Sneaker etc. After each is introduced a simple story map is used to focus on the various components of each story, the main characters, setting, problem, steps taken to solve the problem, and final solution to the story. A map of the fractured tale is compared with a map of the original story (which the students have completed earlier) to see which part or parts changed in the 'fractured version.' Many days (the decision as to how many days is the teacher's based on the student's demonstrated understanding) are spent comparing these various stories so that the notion of change can be internalized for when they become authors of their own stories.

The next step involves the students in deciding which fairy tale they would like to "fracture" for a class collaborative story writing. The class brainstorms all the various stories individuals would like considered. A process of elimination is used to determine the one the majority would like to work on. The original story is discussed and mapped. After mapping, the class brainstorms possible ways to fracture each particular part of the story map. The decision of what gets selected is done through a voting process in which the most votes wins. The audience to whom the story is to be written is also identified. This sets the stage for using only appropriate language or situations. The focus, emphasis, and time in this model is spent on these first two steps.

In the drafting stage the actual story is written. Emphasis is not on spelling, grammar, or other mechanics. The idea here is

to get the brainstorming into an organized fashion. Many of the parts of the story will not be in proper sequence, this will be dealt with during the revision and editing stages.

During the revision stage, students are introduced to the Stark County, Ohio revision model, ARMS. Revision is done with the class as a whole working through each phase of the model. The first step is **Adding** something for clarity, deeper meaning, and\or fuller description. The second step involves **Removing** any redundancy, unnecessary information, and wordiness. The third step has material or information **Moved** to where it better fits sequentially. The last step is too **Substitute** in areas where a better word or phrase is more appropriate, or just sounds better. Guiding students through a set revision procedure gives them a point in which to begin.

Only after all these processes are worked through are students ready for editing their work. This phase of the writing process focuses on mechanics. The Stark County editing model, **CUPS**, is used to introduce the students to editing their work. The procedure involves looking at any words that need to be **Capitalized**, looking at the proper **Usage**, looking at **Punctuation** for correctness, and looking at the **Spelling** of words. Each of these steps are guided by the teacher according to the appropriate developmental level of the students.

The last stage of the writing process involves sharing of the written product. Sharing can be done in a number of ways. Each student could receive an individual copy, a big book could be produced with students acting as illustrators, a bulletin board can

serve as a showcase, a readers theater script can be created, etc. The ideas for sharing are endless and the decision about which way to share should be cooperatively decided.

After the class collaboration has been experienced, the second phase involves going through all of the writing stages in heterogenous groupings of four or five depending on the number of students in the class and age appropriateness. All decisions for the small group collaborative writing are group decided and a group composition is created. This second phase provides another supportive experience before the students are required to compose an individual piece of writing. Mutual support is encouraged through the teachers facilitating of cooperative roles and skills.

This processes has been successfully used by preservice teachers in a field based program and by practicing classroom teachers. Following is an example of a class collaborated, fractured fairy tale that was created using the strategy described. The authors were inner city second graders from northeast Ohio. A representative Bibliography of fairy tales and fractured fairy tales follows.

A Fractured Tale of Cinderella

Once upon a time there lived a girl named Cinderella. She lived in Mill Creek Park with her step-brothers. Everyday Cinderella had to clean up after her step-brothers in the washroom.

One day Cinderella found out that Elvis was having a concert at a fancy restaurant. Cinderella's step-brothers were going to the concert and Cinderella wanted to go, too. But poor Cinderella

had nothing to wear to such a fancy restaurant, so she sadly watched her step-brothers go off to the concert. She then went into the washroom to clean it up.

Suddenly a limo pulled up. It was driven by M.C. Hammer. Sitting in the back of the limo was Cinderella's fairy godmother. The fairy godmother waved her magic wand over Cinderella and instantly Cinderella was dressed in the latest fashion, complete with pump up tennis shoes. The fairy godmother warned Cinderella to be back by midnight or the limo would disappear. Cinderella climbed into the limo and went to the concert.

Cinderella was listening to Elvis singing when a man came up to her and asked her to dance. It was Vanilla Ice. As they danced, Vanilla Ice found something out about Cinderella. She could rap! They rapped and rapped until midnight. At the stroke of midnight, Cinderella turned and ran to her limo. In her haste, one of her pump ups fell off, but she did not have time to go back for it.

Vanilla Ice found the pump up and vowed to find the owner so he could make her his partner. Vanilla Ice went to every house in the area hoping to find the person whose foot fit the pump up. Finally he came to Cinderella's house.

Of course the step-brothers wanted to be Vanilla Ice's partner, but they could not make the pump up fit. Vanilla Ice asked if there was anyone else who could try it on. They replied that they only had a step-sister but the shoe couldn't possibly be hers. Vanilla Ice wanted the step-sister to try it anyway so Cinderella came out from the washroom to try on the pump up. It

fit perfectly. The step-brothers could not believe it! Cinderella would be Vanilla Ice's partner! They asked Cinderella to forgive them and she did.

Cinderella and Vanilla Ice became rapping partners and recorded many hit songs. They lived happily ever after. The End.

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